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CRIMINAL JUSTICE PERSONNEL HONORED FOR THEIR ROLE IN HELPING CRIME VICTIMS

Ceremony held in honor of National Crime Victims' Rights Week

PHOENIX - In a ceremony here yesterday, U.S. Attorney Paul K. Charlton marked the 26th Anniversary of National Crime Victims' Rights Week. In the past 26 years, thousands of people have been victimized by crime - women battered, children abused, men and women assaulted, countless people murdered, and an entire nation devastated by senseless acts of terrorism against our people. Twenty six years ago, President Ronald Reagan declared the first National Crime Victims' Rights Week. Charlton said in his remarks, "As we pay tribute to crime victims and those who dedicate their lives to helping them, our shared challenge is to realize that justice isn't served until crime victims are, that justice isn't served until victims' rights and services are not just celebrated annually, but practiced every day."

The following personnel from the Criminal Justice community were honored for going beyond the call of duty:

Lt. Mark Boyce, Pima County Sheriff's Department, Corrections Bureau: Lt. Boyce comes into contact with a majority of crime victims while engaged in volunteer activity such as the Emergency Services Support Programs. He has tirelessly responded to numerous emergency situations involving local, state and federal victims. He has provided comfort to federal officers who have been injured in the line of duty and the families of slain officers. He repeatedly demonstrates an uncommon sensitivity and a tireless pace when responding to violent circumstances and to crime victims.

Teresa Cleveland and Brenda Love, Inspection Service Operations Technicians, U.S. Postal Inspection Service: In December 2005, Postal Inspectors arrested an individual who possessed hundreds of stolen pieces of mail, including holiday cards, gifts and other correspondence. Due to the volume of mail and time of season, Technicians Cleveland and Love were asked to process all of the recovered mail and determine its origin. Like a "jig-saw puzzle" with over twenty-five hundred pieces, they painstakingly identified each piece of mail and were able to identify and contact over 360 victims in just three-weeks. Technicians Cleveland and Love worked nights and weekends on this task. Their motivation derived from the personal nature of the cards and letters and their desire to see that the intended recipients received the messages without delay.

Sylvia Mendez Conchos, Victim Specialist, Federal Bureau of Investigation: Ms. Conchos has time and again demonstrated her personal and professional devotion to federal crime victims by rendering assistance above and beyond the call of duty in numerous FBI investigations. Some of the most notable cases include a fraud case involving 300 victims, a high-profile murder involving an armored truck driver where the suspect evaded police, and the murder of an elderly gentleman that was witnessed by his wife. In each of these investigations, Ms. Conchos spent countless hours with the victims providing information and support.

Robert Foster, Special Agent, Federal Bureau of Investigation: SA Foster's commitment to federal crime victims is exemplified in two cases. In one case, a homicide victim was buried in an unknown place in the desert. The victim's family was in trauma over the homicide and not knowing the whereabouts of their son. Although tasked with his investigative duties, he stayed in constant contact with the family, solved the homicide

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and located the victim. In doing so, they were able to give their son a proper burial. In the second case, a sexual assault victim received threats of violence and was extremely fearful of appearing in court and did not appear. SA Foster located the victim and developed a rapport with her. Along with managing the case at trial, he performed the duties of a victim advocate which enabled her to testify and resulted in a conviction.

Brian Fuller, Special Agent, Federal Bureau of Investigation: SA Fuller's commitment to federal crime victims directly contributes to his investigative drive. In one instance, he painstakingly pieced together a difficult sexual assault case that lead to the disclosure of additional victims and an ultimate conviction. In another, he revived a previously closed sex abuse investigation after meeting the victim on an unrelated matter. The victim described feeling demoralized upon learning that the investigation of her abuser was closed. SA Fuller's investigative technique ultimately lead to a conviction. His acts of compassion also minimized the trauma of a homicide survivor whose husband was murdered and who had no local family to support her. SA Fuller showed up to every court event which comforted and strengthened her.

James B. Houston, Chaplain, Senior Patrol Agent, U.S. Border Patrol: Chaplain Houston is regularly called upon to assist federal crime victims along the United States and Mexico border. He is resourceful and understanding of these victims' special needs. He also routinely responds to the deaths and injuries of federal officers and does so with a compassion that brings great comfort to the officer and their families. He is a great asset to the Douglas Station and personnel.

Phoenix Divisional Office Enforcement Group 1, Drug Enforcement Administration: Enforcement Group 1 executed a search warrant on a home and seized multiple illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia, weapons and weapon devices, all within immediate access to children. Their investigation did not stop there. The Group quickly identified the danger posed to a 10 year old child living in the home and they vigorously employed the Attorney General's Guidelines for Victim and Witness Assistance. The Group did not just pass the child onto other services. They carefully and diligently worked to reduce trauma to the child and gathered detailed evidence and documentation specific to the child's circumstances which was provided to child welfare authorities to enable them to provide specific services and proceed in the best interests of the child.

Angelica Sutton, Special Agent, Federal Bureau of Investigation: SA Sutton takes deliberate time to thoroughly explain the process and problems of an investigation to the victims, especially where charges may not be filed, which they greatly appreciate. In one case, SA Sutton was alerted to a fraud scheme that sounded familiar to a case she worked from years past. The suspect deceived victims into signing over ownership of their homes. She provided additional background information to the newly assigned agent, and contacted the witnesses and informed them of the new investigation which gave them renewed hope. To date, twenty-five victims have been identified in this scheme. In another instance, SA Sutton, while on an out-of-state assignment, continued contact with no less than twenty-five crime victims to ensure that their funds were salvaged from a Ponzi scheme. Her actions in that case resulted in a \$40,000 seizure.

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